

Youth shelter residents leaving their mark with mural

By KYLE LOWRY
Tribune Staff Reporter

Children at the county youth shelter will soon be painting the town red...and all the other colors of the rainbow.

In mid-August, staff from the Floyd County Youth Services Bureau (FCYSB) and children housed at the shelter will begin painting a mural on four pylons at the New Albany riverfront amphitheater.

"It's cool that we get to do it," said Nichole (not her real name), a 13-year-old shelter resident. "We all get to spend time with each other and we're not all locked up in one little building."

The theme for the mural is activities and ideas children can pursue instead of getting involved

with drugs and alcohol. The FCYSB received a \$2,750 grant from the county's Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs Task Force to start the project. Sherwin Williams Paint stores on Grant Line Road and Dixie Highway in Louisville have pledged gallons of green and blue paint, along with any returned paint.

The anti-drug mural will be drawn by local artist Teresa Jackson on Aug. 20 and children and staff will begin painting the pylons on Aug. 27.

"For me, it was a really cool opportunity to do something for the community I live in and help the kids at the shelter do something they can be proud of," Jackson said.

Jackson met with the children from the shelter last week to brainstorm ideas for the mural and together they came up with activities such as

reading and playing sports. "Instead of doing drugs you can go to the mall with friends, go to the library, talk to other people if you feel like you're going to do them and play football and soccer," Nichole said.

Painting the mural is another activity that will help keep residents at the shelter from getting the summertime blues, while sending a good message to other youth, said Leah Pezzarossi, executive director of the FCYSB.

"It sends positive messages to kids," said Melissa McCartin, community liaison for the bureau.

"And it will be the kids sending the message," added Pezzarossi.

Although most of the shelter's 17-member staff

SEE MURAL, PAGE A4



MURAL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE A1

will take turns painting the pylons themselves, the group is looking for other adults to volunteer their time to help paint places that are out of a child's reach. Additional do-

nations of different sizes and shapes of paintbrushes are also needed, Pezzarossi said. Anyone wishing to donate supplies or time can contact Pezzarossi at 948-5481

Contact the writer at klowry@news-tribune.net.